

SOME  
CONSIDERATIONS  
TOWARDS  
PEACE and QUIETNESS  
IN  
RELIGION.

In Answer to the Question, *Whether*  
*the Multitude are fit Readers of*  
HOLY SCRIPTURE.

*By W. Marby.*

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*Nolite Sanctum dare Canibus, nec projiciatis margaritas vestras ante Porcos. Matth. 7. 6.*

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is the same betwixt the Scripture and the unstable People.

We can't suppose them, (*viz.* Women, Tradesmen, &c.) able to understand the Circumstances of time and place when and where it was written; nor the coherence of things; nor the Customes and Rites of the several Nations to which it alludes; but that they will contrive and apply it, as though it intended the very State and Condition of these Islands. Nothing has been more experienc'd than this. And here the Reader will please to observe, I am not going about to argue this matter from the *abuse* of Scripture, but from the *popular* unfitness and incapacity to meddle with it. The argument, I confess, is not good, from the ill use of a thing to take away the use: but I hope the argument is good, Such a man is of a weak digestion, Therefore not to be advis'd to the use of strong meats: or he is of a temper apt to quarrel, Therefore let him abstain from much Wine.

That this may appear, let it be remembred, the Ordinary means to a right understanding of the Scriptures are these, Learning, study, rational inference, collation of places, consulting the Original and Expositions of the primitive Fathers, who liv'd nearest the Age of the Apostles, together with an humble temper and constant prayer for Gods blessing upon all.

Consider also how naturally they mistake these following Texts;

*The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth.*

*In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

*Ye are bought with a price, be not ye the servants of men.*

*Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.*

*Why as though living in the world are ye subject to Ordinances?*

*The Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them, but it shall not be so among you.*

*O father thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, but hast revealed them unto babes.*

Illuminated by these and other Texts, the grave Shop-keeper can see Popery in the Church and Tyranny in the State: and in vain shall you or I tell him that he is mistaken in his interpretation of them.

I would only say this, That *learning* and *modesty* are necessary to the understanding of the Bible; the People generally want *both*, therefore no competent Readers. What will the grave *Inn-keeper* say to this? 'Tis true, I am not learned my self, but our Minister Mr. T. is a very precious man, and a Gospel Preacher, and able to teach us the right sence of the aforesaid Texts.

Very good, Though thou beest not learned, nor so and so qualified thy self, thy Minister is; this seems to resolve all into the Minister; and to confess unawares, That not the unlearned People, but the Church or Pastors thereof are fit to give the sence of Gods Word. Thus, perhaps, unawares art thou confessing that Popery, (about which those of thy Party have so long confounded the peace of Christendom) of

resting in the *Church* or *Pastors* thereof, for the sence of Gods Word.

Which being duly considered, it seems to me a little incongruous, if not absurd, to say, That every *Weaver, Brewer, Taylor* hath (notwithstanding his want of the aforesaid requisits, to wit, *learning* and *humility*) a *judgement* of *discretion* to assent or dissent from the sence given by the Church. To allow him such a judgement, and yet restrain him the external liberty thereof, or censure him for it, seems to him very hard and unjust. My dulness, I confess, apprehends not the difference betwixt this *Judgement* of *discretion* and that which some call the *private Spirit*.

What? am I allowed a judgement of discretion, will the honest Taylor say; and must I be debarr'd the liberty thereof? must I pin my faith on the sleeve of the Church? No (good Mr. Parson) for all your carnal Sophistry, my *Judgement* obliges me to cut out my own Religion and set it up for a Fashion.

To this the ingenious and worthy Dr. Tillotson answers in his late Sermon on 1 John 4. 1. pag. 39. That all Persons having Capacities for it, are to read the Scriptures and judge for themselves in matters of Religion, but with modesty and humility, with great submission to their spiritual Guides.

*Having Capacities for it*; which excludes all immodest and unlearned People from judging for themselves: *with submission to their spiritual Guides*, makes the Taylors judgement of discretion an impertinent thing. It is to be considered (saith the Doctor in the aforesaid Sermon) *That the proper remedy in this case is not to deprive men of this priviledge of judging for themselves*



themselves in matters of Religion ; but to use the best means to prevent the abuse of it. And this means is, we are to caution them not to assume to themselves the Authority of Judges, instead of demeaning themselves with the submission of Learners. 'Tis an excellent caution, were the multitude capable to receive it.

Well, but you will say, it's true, the Multitude may be somewhat incapable to judge for them selves as to doubtful and disputable matters. But as to all matters necessary to salvation, the *Scriptures* are plain and evident to every Taylors understanding. Perhaps not.

Where the *obscurity* dwells, of divers Articles necessary to salvation, whether in the *Scriptures* or the *Peoples* understandings, I shall not undertake to determine : but this, I hope, will be granted me, that the doctrine of the Trinity, the Article of the Holy Catholick Church, Infants Baptism, obedience to Authority Civil and Ecclesiastical are matters necessary to salvation ; and yet how many thousands (good serious Tradesmen) do attentively read the *English Bible* and miss the Orthodox belief of these things ? So that to tell us of such a brightness in the *Scriptures* as to all necessary matters, is to inform us, as Countrey People do Travellers, enquiring their way to such a Town ; that we can't go astray, when nothing is more casie.

I know not, but if the *Scriptures* were so extremely perspicuous, methinks the *Controversies* between us and the *Papists* and *Socinians* were soon at an end : what should hinder it ? the blindness of their understandings or perverseness of their wills ; alas ! object this to a Presbyterian or Papist, Independent or Socinian, they will exceedingly pity your blindness.

Having premis'd these things, let's proceed to examine what's usually objected to the contrary.

And first are we not commanded to search the Scriptures, *John* 5. 39. Indeed our *English Bible* renders the word *Search* in the imperative mood ; whereas it doth not appear in the Original whether it be *indicative* or *imperative*. But supposing it to have been spoken *imperatively*, Go search the Scriptures ; 'tis a mistake to think they were the Vulgar and Unlearned Jews our blessed Saviour was then discoursing with, whose incapacities he understood too well to require any such thing of them. By *Scriptures* here, he meant the *Psalms*, the Predictions of *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, &c. the *Mosaical* types and figures of the *Messiah* ; which, at that time, the most learned Jews had enough to do to unriddle. The word *ἵνα* *Search* being a Metaphor taken from such as dig deep in the *mines*, imports such an *Enquiry* as unlearned People, who understand not the Original, cannot be thought capable of. The maternal language of *Judea* at that time and long before was *Syriac*, and (as learned men say) the Vulgar Jews of that Age understood *Hebrew* no more than now Vulgar Italians do *Latin*.

But ( 'twill be said ) The Law and the Prophets were then read in the Synagogues every Sabbath day. Yes, in the *Hebrew* tongue, as at this day ; and interpreted by the *Scribes* and *Jewish Doctors* ; otherwise not understood by the common people : The perfect *Hebrew* ever since the *Captivity* ceasing to be the Vulgar Language of the Jews. The Reader may please to see a further account of this, in Bishop *Walton's* Preface before his *Introduction to the Eastern tongues* : Printed Anno 1655.

The

The Old Testament was not then extant in the Vulgar, that is, the *Syriac* tongue: nor perhaps any *Chaldeæ Paraphrase*. Or if it were, a Paraphrase is one thing and a Translation is another. 'Tis to me a little strange, that our blessed *Saviour* (if it were a matter of so grand necessity) either left no *injunction* touching an intire *translation* of the Scriptures, or that the Apostles recorded it not. 'Tis true, the Old Testament was then extant in Greek, which the Vulgar Inhabitants of *Judea* understood not.

But are not the *Bereans* commended, *Acts* 17. 11. in that they received the *Word* with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so? Yes *Paul* and *Sylas* went into the Synagogue at *Berea*, and there preached to the Jews, *opening* and *alleging* out of the Old Testament, *That Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead*. Whereupon the *Bereans*, as many as were capable of it, consulting the Scriptures honestly and without prejudice, were converted to the Christian faith. Where it is to be observed, That these *Bereans* by the Apostles *Preaching* and *Expounding* understood the Scriptures and never before; though they read them and heard them read every Sabbath day.

*How surprised we should be*. They were of a more generous and docible temper than other Jews. In all which there is not, that I can perceive, any contradiction to what I have said, that the *Multitude* cannot of themselves and by their own Reading understand the Scriptures, that is, without the guidance of their Pastors.

But the *Bereans* examined *St. Paul's* doctrine by the Scriptures, therefore the *People* are to examine their Pastors doctrine by the Scriptures; It will not follow. The *Bereans* were as yet no *Christians* but *Jews*; and consequently *He* not as yet acknowledged for their Pastor. The case is not the same between *Christian Pastors* and *Jews*, as between *Christian Preachers* and their own flocks. *Christian people*, if they regard the Scriptures, are not to judge, but to obey and submit themselves to their own Pastors, who watch for their souls as those that must give an account, Heb: 13. 17. We may talk of our judgement of discretion, and mistake our own petulant humours for it. What but confusion and distraction can be the consequence of this maxim, that the *Sheep* may arraign the doctrine of their Pastors? The *Clergy* therefore in case of erroneous doctrine are to be accountable to their own *Superiors*.

There are divers other *Texts* objected against the premises, but none which the ingenious Reader (and to such alone I address this Paper) may not easily answer. That the *Israelites* were to meditate in the *Law* and teach it diligently to their Children, is very often and very impertinently objected. For the *Law* of God is one thing and the *Scripture* at large is another. By the *Law* of God is meant not every passage in the Bible, but the moral, judicial, and ceremonial *Laws* contained in the Books of *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, and *Deuteronomy*. Which *Laws* the *Israelites* were first to be taught by their Priests *Deut.* 31. 11. and afterwards to teach them their Children: This is nothing to our case. That *Christian People* are to know and understand  
Gods

Gods *commandments* no body ever doubted; That they are bound (I mean the unlearned) to read or understand *Ezekiel*, *Daniel* or the *Revelations*, yea or *St. Paul's* Epistles, is that which I deny; and I would gladly see a pertinent *Text* to prove it.

As for *S. Paul's* commendation of *Timothy*, that he had known the *Holy Scriptures* from a Child, it's no contradiction to what has been said.

Imagine *Timothy*, a select Person, an *Angel* of the Church, understood all the Prophecies of the Old Testament from a Child, will it follow that every Woman and Tradesman can be so happy? Again, by the *Holy Scriptures* cannot be meant here all the Prophecies of the Old Testament; because divers parts thereof, as the beginning of *Genesis*, the Book of *Canticles*, the first and last Chapters of *Ezekiel* were not to be read by the ancient Jews under thirty years of age, as *S. Hieron* informs us in his Epistle to *Paulinus*.

In whose dayes the scriptures being so profan'd by Vulgar hands, mov'd him to this following *resentment*, which the Reader will give me leave to transcribe out of that Epistle.

*Agricolæ, Cementarii; Fabri metallorum, Lignorumq; Cæsores, Lanarii quoque & Fullones & ceteri qui variam supellectilem fabricant, absque doctore esse non possunt. Quod medicorum est, promittunt medici; transtulit fabrilis fabri. Sola Scripturarum ars est, quam passim omnes sibi vendicant. Hanc garrulus anus, hanc delirus senex, hanc Sophista verbosus, hanc universi præsumunt, lacerant, docent antequam discant, &c.*  
That is, to be a Smith, or Mason, or Carpenter, or any other sort of Craftsman, there is need of a Master.  
only

only the Trade of expounding Scripture is a Mystery which every one arrogates to himself. Here the Physician will be prescribing receipts, the Lawyer will be demurring, and every handy-crafts-man will be handling the Word of God with impure hands. This the prattling hufwife, this the old Dotard, this the wrangling Sophister, in a word this men of all sorts take upon them to have skill in, and to teach what they never learn'd. *Thus he.*

The Bible then in his dayes (you will say) had been translated into the vulgar tongue. It was so, and perhaps two centuries before: and into *Greek* long before our Saviours time. The question all this while is not whether the Scriptures may be read in the Vulgar Language? no, that which *S. Hierome* resented, was the promiscuous and unlicens'd use of them by all sorts of *ill-dispos'd* People. Let the question therefore be whether the Church in prudence might not restrain such profanation of them? or whether conduces more to the honour of Religion, the peace and unity of the Church, to have the use of Vulgar Translations with or without Licence?

I don't find the Church of *Rome* themselves absolutely forbidding the use of Vulgar Translations; but only providing that the unlearned and unstable people may read, but not *wrest* them to their own destruction, as *S. Peter* speaks. See *Bellarmin. lib. 2. de Verbo Dei cap. 15.* I wish it were the worst of their errors; whereby they have preserved themselves, if not from all disputes of Religion, at least, from that Labyrinth of *Reformation*, into which we of these Nations seem to have brought our selves at this day. For as if Religion



ligion had not been often enough reform'd since *Hen. 8.* we are at this day not without our apprehensions, nor our numerous *Adversaries* without their strong hopes of another *Reformation.*

Let it be remembred that envy and inconstancy are the natural humours of the *Multitude*; and that no experience hath found these humours any whit abated, but rather heightened by their familiarity with the Scriptures.

The *High Commission Court* in causes Ecclesiastical, if restor'd, were a happy remedy (some think) to suppress heresies, errors, schisms, blasphemies, and abuses in Religion. But alas! reflect a little on our *late* times, and then tell me what did this High Commission Court signifie against the *multitude* intoxicated with mistakes of Holy Scripture?

But Heresies and Schisms (you will say) have been vented for the most part not by ignorant but learned men. I know not: perhaps if the truth were known, their pride and ill nature would be found much greater than their *learning*; and their schisms might have expir'd with themselves, were not the Holy Scriptures unadvisedly expos'd into the rude hands of the *Multitude.*

To be short, let the Reader please to observe with me this one thing, that unlearned People, when they read the Bible, must of necessity construe it by an implicit faith on the skill of the *Translators*: and why not by the same faith and much more safety and humility receive the substance and effect of it, collected by the Church into Books of Piety and Devotion? This (I humbly think) were not to keep them in ig-

norance, but in sobriety and in their wits. A man would think (considering the popular incapacity and weakness to receive so *strong meat*, not being chew'd nor prepar'd for them) such Books as the *Catechism* of the Church of *England*, or the *whole Duty of man* much fitter for them. *S. Paul* gave this judgement concerning his *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 3. 2. *I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet are ye able.*

Unlearned People (I say) whether they will or no, must depend on the fidelity of the Translators of Holy Scripture. For ought they know, it may be all misinterpreted into the *Vulgar Language*, as certainly many places are in our *English Bible*. To instance in a few.

*Matth. 28. 19. Gal. 5. 17. Coloss. 3. 20. 1 Cor. 7. 9. Matth. 19. 11. Job 7. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 2. Daniel 4. 27. Acts 17. 22.*

All which and many other Texts are made use of at every turn to justify their loose and Fanatical opinions; Particularly you shall find *Gal. 5. 17.* cited by the *Presbyterian Assembly of Divines*, to prove the impossibility of keeping Gods Commandments; the words in the *Original* admitting no such construction.

We will not pin our faith on the sleeve of the Church; no by no means; The Church is not infallible: but on the sleeve of Translators we will pin all our Religion.

*The self-same thing we will abhor  
One way, and long another for. Hadibr.*

Well,

Well, in vain did we expect the common Peoples amendment by their own reading of the Scriptures. In vain have they eaten of this *Tree of knowledge*. And whereas divers of them, who read the Bible, are yet modest and tractable enough to Government, and conformable to the present establish'd Church; some, you may observe, are indifferent for any Religion; others are *conformable* not so much from their *understanding* of that *book*, as out of the *loyalty* and *honesty* of their natures: and that such may have *licence* to read it, no body denies. For the *rest*, who are inclin'd to faction and *change*, *experience* hath made it apparent enough, the *liberty* of the Scriptures hath made them more factious and seditious.

For instance, there are many extraordinary passages or matters of *fact* in the Old Testament, particularly in the Books of *Samuel*, the *Kings* and *Chronicles*, which to *them* are very good arguments against the present Government of *Church* and *State*. The destruction of the *Groves* and *high places* and *molten Images* by *Josiah*, the slaughter of *Baal's* Priests by *Jehu*, have been very good arguments against the *Hierarchy* and Cathedral Service of the Church of *England*. The *spoiling* of the *Egyptians*, the zeal of *Phinehas* against *Zimri* and *Cozbi*, are good *Precedents* for Reformation and defensive Arms against the King. And *examples*, so they be *Scripture*, are as argumentative with the *Vulgar*, as any Precepts whatsoever.

The English Bible is become a *Glass*, wherein the factious Multitude can see all the Vices, but none of the Vertues of their *Governours*.

'Tis too apparent that *English men* were never so ill-natur'd towards one another, so sacrilegious towards God, nor so regardless of their *Clergy*, as they have been for this last *Century*. And the Author of the late book entituled, *The Reasons of the Contempt of the Clergy*, might have assigned one Reason for it, which I think he has forgot, namely the liberty of the *English Bible*.

For in *Scripture* I do not find (saith the judicious Inn-keeper) any such necessity of the *Clergy*: do I not read Joel 2. 28. *It shall come to pass in the last dayes, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesie, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see Visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those dayes will I pour out my spirit and they shall prophesie.*

And do I not read, 1 Cor. 12. 7. *To every man is given the manifestation of the spirit to profit withall.* And Heb. 8. 11. *They shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest.*

Veily, methinks the *Scripture* (saith the profound Weaver) holds forth rather a *Presbyterial* than *Pre-latical* Government. For don't I read Luke 22. 25. *The Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them, but it shall not be so among you.* And 1 Tim. 4. 15. *Neglect not the gift that was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery: And in vain shall you or I tell him that he is mistaken in his interpretation of these Texts.* Yea as for Luke

22. 25. the *spirit*, saith he, witnesseth with my *spirit*, whatever your carnal *Greek* sayes to the contrary, I am not mistaken.

To dress any meat on the Lords Day is with him a breach of the fourth Commandment, *Thou shalt do no manner of work, thou nor thy maid-servant, &c.*

The scriptures came at last to be so abused, that about the year 1645. you might have seen Papers publicly affixt on Walls and Posts in the City of *London* with these and the like *inscriptions*. On such a day such a *Brewers* Clerk *exerciseth*; such a *Taylor* expoundeth, such a *Waterman* teacheth, &c.

Which impudence *S. Basil* reprov'd long ago in *Demosthenes*, Cook to the Emperour *Valens*, *Tuum est pulmenta decoquere, non Evangelium exponere*; mind your Pottage, and meddle not with the Mysteries of *Scripture*.

I end all with a passage or two out of our own Histories. The first out of *Howes* in the Life of *Q. Mary*.

In the year 1553. *Sr. John Gates* was Arraigned and sentenced to death for Rebellion against his *Soveraign* the Princess *Mary*, Eldest Daughter to King *Hen. VIII.* At the place of Execution he made his Confession to the People in these words.

My

**M**Y coming hither this day ( good People ) is to dye, whereof I assure you all, I am well worthy. For I have lived as Vitiously all the dayes of my life as any man hath done in the World. I was the greatest Reader of *Scripture* that might be of a man of my degree, and a worse follower thereof not living; for I did not read to the intent to be Edified thereby, nor to seek the glory of God; but contrariwise arrogantly to be seditions and to dispute thereof, and privately to interpret it after mine own brain and affection. Wherefore ( good People ) I exhort you all to beware how and after what sort you come to read Gods holy Word. For it is not a trifle or playing game to deal with Gods holy Mysteries. For as the *Bee* of one flower gathers honey, and the *Spider* poyson of the same; even so except you humbly submit your selves to God, and charitably read the same to the intent to be edified thereby, it is to you as poyson and worse, and it were better to let it alone. Thus be.

Better for him at least, and all such ill-disposed People to understand their *Catechism*, that is, the principles and maxims of Christian Religion collected by the Church: and to pray to God that they may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godliness and honesty.



The other passage is this. One of the Murderers of K. Charles the First of glorious memory, as he passed to Tyburn in October 1660. called for his bible, and embracing it, said, *This hath the whole Cause in it*, meaning the *Good Old Cause*. Yea, the cause for which I have engaged is contained in this book of God. A certain Minister asked him, what he meant by the Cause? He answered, Sir, I mean that Cause which we were engaged in under the Parliament; which was for common right and freedom, and against *Surplice* and *Common-Prayer*.

This was Colonel *Axtel*, a man of good natural Parts. see Collection of Speeches, Prayers, and private passages of Regicides, Printed 1661.

To this we may add the words of Colonel *John Barkstead*, another of the Regicides out of the Narrative published by their own Friends, anno 1662.

A Friend coming to Visit him that week he suffered, ~~did partake of many choice breathings from him~~: one was this, "Although I find I have no strength to encounter with those great tryals I am to meet with, yet  
"I will labour to quiet my heart through the Spirit  
"of faith from that *Scripture*, *Isaiah 30. 7*. Your  
"strength is to fit still; and indeed I find it so.

Then one present asked him, if he thought the Cause in which he had been engaged, would ever rise again; he Answered, the Cause lyes in the Bosom of Christ, and as sure as Christ arose, the Cause will rise again:  
and

and we dye but to make way for it. For when *John* the *Baptist* came to prepare the way for *Christ*, he must be beheaded for it; so we by our death do but make way for the next coming of *Jesus Christ* personally to reign a *Thousand* years with his *Saints*: and although we dye, the *Cause* will certainly live. This he gathered out of *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, and the *Revelations*.

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**FINIS.**

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**POSTSCRIPT.**

## POSTSCRIPT.

**I**N the year 1536. when the Bible was exposed in English by the commandment of K. *Hen. 8.* these following reasons were given *pro* and *con*, which the Reader will give me leave to transcribe out of the History of those times with some few remarks.

Those who deny the People the use of the Bible in the Vulgar Tongue, must needs know their own doctrine and practices to be inconsistent with it. Therefore Arch-bishop *Cranmer* who was projecting the most effectual means for promoting the Reformation, moved in Convocation, That they should petition the King for leave to make a Translation of the Bible; which Bishop *Gardiner* and all his party opposed both in Convocation and in secret with the King; saying, That all the Heresies and extravagant opinions which then distracted all *Germany*, sprang from the common use of the Scriptures: and that there was an example before their eyes, of nineteen *Hollanders* that in *May* 1535. were convicted for denying Christ to be both God and Man, or that he took flesh and blood of the Virgin *Mary*; or that the Sacraments had any effect on those that received them. It was complained that all these drew their damnable errors from the indiscreet use of the Scriptures: and that to offer the Bible in the English tongue

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during

during these distractions, would prove, as they alledged, the greatest snare that could be.

Therefore they proposed (namely *Gardiner* and his party) that there should be a short Exposition of the most useful and necessary doctrines of the Christian faith given to the People in the English tongue for the instruction of the Nation; which would keep them in a certain subjection to the King and Church in matters of faith.

The other Party, though they liked well the publishing such a Treatise in the Vulgar Tongue, yet by no means thought it sufficient; but said, the People must be allowed to *search* the Scripture; by which they might be convinced that such Treatises were according to it. *Whereof* (the Reader may take notice) *the unstable multitude are excellent Judges.*

To this great opposition was made at Court. For some told the King that diversity of opinions would arise out of it; and that he would be no longer able to Govern his Subjects, if he gave way to it. *These were shrewd guessers.*

On the other hand it was represented, That nothing would make the King's Supremacy more acceptable to the Nation. *with what truth this was suggested, the event hath made apparent: our numerous Sects at this day finding no such thing as his Majesties Supremacy in the holy Scriptures.*

Further it was said, that nothing would render the Pope more hateful to the People, than to let them see that whereas the Popes had governed them by a blind obedience, and kept them in darkness, the King brought them into the light by the free use of Gods Word.

Yes,

Yes, They were brought out of the darkness of Popery into a great many *lights*: the light of Presbytery, the light of Independency, the light of Socinianism, of Anabaptism, Muggletonianism, Quakerism, Fifth monarchy men, &c. None of these *lights*, I confess, arising out of the Bible, but out of the unstable noddles of the People, mistaking and perverting that Bible. Into what distraction this Variety of *lights*, in process of time, would turn, was not then foreseen, *Anno* 1536.

It was said moreover, That nothing would more effectually extirpate the Popes Authority (*and I am afraid, in time, the King's Authority.*)

These arguments (saith the Historian) enforced by the power which *Ann Boleyn* had in Kings *Henry's* affections, were so much considered by him, that he gave order for setting about the *Translation* immediately.

Doubtless his intention was good: but the fruit of it he saw in a few years. For his Trading Subjects generally not having temper or capacity to understand it, were converted from the blind obedience and merits of Popery, into a world of envy, malice, and jealousy one of another. Of this the King himself takes notice in his Speech to the House of Commons, *Anno* 1545. the words are these, *viz.*

He could not but observe, "That instead of charity and concord, discord and division ruled everywhere. He cited *St. Paul's* words, That charity was gentle and not *envious*, nor *prond*. But when one called another Heretique, and the other called him Papist or Pharisee, it was no sign of charity. Some (said he) are too stiff in their old *Mumpsimus*, others are too busie and curious in their new *Sumpsimus*. He pro-

“ceded to reprove those of the *Laitie* who railed at  
 “their Bishops and Priests. For though they had the  
 “Bible given them in their Mother Tongue; yet, said  
 “he, That was only given them to inform their own  
 “Consciencés, and instruct their Children and Families;  
 “not to rail against Priests, as some vain persons did.  
 “He was sorry that such a Jewel as the Word of God  
 “was so ill used: but much more sorry that men follow-  
 “ed it so little. For charity (said he) was never faint-  
 “er; and a Godly life never less appeared; and God  
 “never less Reverenced and Worshipped. Therefore  
 “he exhorted them to live as brethren in charity toge-  
 “ther, to Love, Dread and Serve God.

One passage more of this *speech* I cannot but observe.  
 “The fault of all this (saith he) I must impute  
 “chiefly to the Fathers and Teachers of the Spirituality,  
 “who preach one against another without charity or  
 “discretion. Few preach the Word of God truly and  
 “sincerely. And how can the poor People live in con-  
 “cord whilest their Teachers sow debate among them?  
 “Therefore he exhorted them to set forth Gods Word  
 “by true preaching: or else he as Gods Vicar and high  
 “Minister would see these enormities corrected.

This was excellently spoken. The distractions of  
 those times were to be attributed in a great measure to  
*Preachers*. I wish I could not say so of ours.

One thing I understand not; That to prevent indecen-  
 cy, contradiction and disorder in Gods publick Worship;  
 the *clergy* are obliged to the use of one Liturgy or set  
 Form of Prayer; and at the same time (every Novitice  
 left to the liberty of his own discourse in the *Pulpit*;  
 provided he quote *Scripture* for it.

St. Paul



As *St. Paul* leaves *Not Timothy* himself to his own intention to collect Gods Word out of the *Scriptures*. No, but hold fast the *Form of sound words* which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in *Christ Jesus*: and the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same communicate thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also, *2 Tim. 2.*

The seed of Gods Word were perhaps better prepared by the Church, than left to the liberty and discretion of every sower to mistake tares for wheat. Then would folk come to Church not to admire such a Preachers good memory or good parts, but to Worship God and hear his *Commandments*, gravely and materially expounded by his Church.

Bishop Bramhall was a discerning Person; and tells Mr. Baxter in his answer to him about *Grotian Religion*, that it's true, *Homilies may come short of preaching in point of popular efficacy, but far exceed it in point of security.* There is no comparison betwixt the Harangues of Episcopal men and those of the Fanaticks. Yet will the Fanaticks by the help of tone and elocution ever outdo them in point of popular estimation.

One of the Emperours of ~~*Muscovy*~~ (as I have been credibly inform'd) being weary of the variety and infinite jarrings among Preachers, and of the distractions thereby fomented among his Subjects, utterly forbade Preaching throughout all his Dominions; and instead thereof commanded his Clergy to read certain Homilies to the People exhorting to the practice of *Christian Religion*, without adding one word of their own upon pain of death. He saw otherwise no likelihood of quietness or friendship among his Subjects.

In these Kingdoms at this day (I speak it with all humble submission) the *Christian Religion* is not preached to the *People* under its proper heads, which are the Creed, the Lords Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the Sacraments, but handled in confusion on this and other *Texts*; and mingled with their own *Philosophy* and *Reasonings*. The end of it is, *The People are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*; as *St. Paul* speaks.

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**FINIS.**

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